

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 DODE-00 CIAE-00

INRE-00 NSAE-00 USSS-00 /031 W

----- 076814

O 251613Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8285

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 15456

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, GW

SUBJECT: FRG UNMOVING IN OPPOSITION TO FURTHER US ARMS
SHIPMENTS FROM FRG TO MIDDLE EAST

REF: STATE 210441

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND CALLED ON FRG FOREIGN OFFICE STATE SECRETARY FRANK OCTOBER 25 TO PRESENT US GOVERNMENT VIEWS CONTAINED REFTEL. FRANK REMAINED FIRM IN EXPRESSING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S POSITION THAT NO FURTHER US SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL SHOULD OCCUR FROM FRG TERRITORY. HE EXPLAINED THE "MASSIVE PRESSURES" ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND SAID THAT THE FRG WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT A POSSIBLE ARAB OIL BOYCOTT. FRANK ASKED THAT THE USG, FOR WHOSE INTERESTS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD SHOWN FULL UNDERSTANDING IN THE EARLIER PHASES OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, RECIPROCATATE BY NOW SHOWING UNDERSTANDING FOR THE DIFFICULT GERMAN POSITION. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND INDICATED THAT THE GERMAN POSITION WOULD OBVIOUSLY CAUSE GREAT CONCERN IN WASHINGTON, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF INDICATIONS THAT THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS STILL FAR FROM SETTLED.

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1. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND PRESENTED THE US POSITION FULLY TO STATE SECRETARY FRANK IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTEL. HE ADDED THAT CONTRARY TO FRANK'S APPARENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, IT

WAS STILL FAR FROM SETTLED, AND THERE WAS EVERY INDICATION THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD REQUIRE FURTHER RESUPPLYING. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND NOTED THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION BY ALLUDING TO THE US DECISION TO PLACE ITS TROOPS IN GERMANY ON ALERT. HE COMMENTED THAT THIS MOVE HARDLY SUGGESTED THAT THE CONFLICT HAD BEEN DIFFUSED, AS FRANK HAD SUGGESTED THE PREVIOUS EVENING (BONN 15408). THE AMBASSADOR CONCLUDED BY REQUESTING THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RECONSIDER ITS POSITION.

2. FRANK SAID THAT THE GERMAN POSITION HAD BEEN TAKEN BY CHANCELLOR BRANDT, AND THAT THE POSITION WAS FIRM. HE REFERRED TO THE UNDERSTANDING WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER SCHEEL HAD EXPRESSED FOR THE US POSITION AT THE AMBASSADORS' MEETING ON OCTOBER 16. FRANK SAID THAT SINCE THEN, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD COME UNDER MASSIVE PRESSURE FROM THE ARAB STATES WHO HAD CHARGED THAT THE WEAPONS DELIVERIES EFFECTED FROM GERMAN SOIL HAD PERMITTED THE ISRAELIS TO MOUNT THE OFFENSIVE WHICH GAVE THEM THE BRIDGEHEAD ON THE WEST BANK OF THE SUEZ. HE SAID THE ARABS CONTINUED TO EXERCISE HEAVY PRESSURE ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, WITH THE ARABS NOW CHARGING THAT GERMAN CREDIBILITY WAS NO LONGER TO BE TRUSTED. FRANK SAID THAT THIS LATTER CHARGE STEMMED FROM THE FACT THAT FOLLOWING HIS DISCUSSION WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON OCTOBER 23, HE HAD INFORMED THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR IN BONN THAT NO FURTHER SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL WOULD TAKE PLACE FROM FRG TERRITORY. THE SHIPPING OF MATERIEL IN THE PAST FEW DAYS FROM BREMERHAVEN BY ISRAELI SHIPS HAD MADE NONSENSE OF THIS STATEMENT TO THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR.

3. FRANK STATED THAT AT NO TIME SINCE THE OCTOBER 16 MEETING BETWEEN SCHEEL AND THE AMBASSADOR HAD ANYONE ON THE GERMAN SIDE CONCEIVED IT POSSIBLE THAT ISRAELI SHIPS
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WOULD BE USED TO TRANSPORT THE ARMS AND MILITARY GOODS FROM BREMERHAVEN. WHEN THE GOVERNMENT LEARNED OF THE ISRAELI SHIPS INVOLVEMENT, IT HAD IMMEDIATELY ASKED THAT THE SHIP LOADING IN BREMERHAVEN DEPART ASAP, AND HAD MADE THE DECISION THAT THE SHIP PRESENTLY LYING IN BREMEN WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO LOAD ANY GOODS. HE SAID THIS DECISION HAD BEEN MADE IN ORDER TO TRY TO RESTORE SOME

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EXDIS

DEGREE OF CREDIBILITY WITH THE ARABS. HE ADDED THAT, IN DEALING WITH THE ARABS, IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE FRG TO ASSERT THAT IT HAD NO KNOWLEDGE AS TO EXACTLY WHAT WAS BEING SHIPPED BY THE US FROM GERMAN TERRITORY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THIS WAS INDEED THE CASE. THE ARABS SIMPLY DID NOT BELIEVE THIS ASSERTION.

4. FRANK SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD MADE ITS DECISION AGAINST FURTHER RESUPPLYING OF ISRAEL FROM FRG TERRITORY BECAUSE OF THE AWARENESS THAT AN OIL BOYCOTT BY THE ARAB STATES WOULD CREATE CHAOS IN GERMANY IN A VERY SHORT TIME. HE SAID THAT GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE GOVERNMENT'S ALLOWING ITSELF TO BE PLACED INTO SUCH A SITUATION. HE ASKED THAT THE US GOVERNMENT SHOW THE SAME HIGH DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE FRG POSITION THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD ACCORDED THE US DURING THE DIFFICULT DAYS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT EARLIER THIS MONTH.

5. FRANK ASKED WHETHER THE US SIDE HAD BEEN ABLE TO CLARIFY THE SOURCE OF THE GERMAN CLEARANCE FOR THE ISRAELI SHIPPING OPERATION WHICH MINISTER CASH HAD MENTIONED THE PREVIOUS EVENING (PARA 5, BONN 15408). HE SAID THE GERMAN SIDE WOULD BE EXTREMELY INTERESTED TO KNOW WHERE THE USG HAD OBTAINED SUCH ASSURANCES. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND UNDERTOOK TO TRY TO FIND OUT THIS SECRET

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INFORMATION.

6. FRANK ALSO ASKED WHETHER THE STATEMENT IN AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND'S PRESENTATION, I.E., THAT THE US WOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN ITS SUPPLY EFFORT (PARA 3 REF-TEL), MEANT THAT THIS EFFORT WOULD BE CONTINUED FROM GERMAN TERRITORY. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND SAID HIS INSTRUCTIONS WERE NOT CLEAR ON THIS POINT, BUT OBVIOUSLY THE SHIP NOW IN BREMEN COULD HARDLY PARTICIPATE IN THE

RESUPPLYING EFFORT IF ITS LOADING WERE NOT TO BE PERMITTED BY THE FRG.

7. FRANK CLOSED THE DISCUSSION BY STRESSING HIS HOPE THAT THE PRESENT DIFFICULT SITUATION NOT BURDEN US/FRG RELATIONS. HE SAID THE FRG HAD DONE ITS PART TO HELP THE US IN THE PERIOD OF EMERGENCY--SOMETHING NO OTHER COUNTRY IN WESTERN EUROPE HAD BEEN WILLING TO DO--AND NOW HOPED THAT IF FURTHER RESUPPLYING OF ISRAEL WERE NECESSARY, OTHER CHANNELS OUTSIDE GERMANY BE FOUND TO CARRY IT OUT. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT AS EASY AS IT SOUNDED INASMUCH AS THE ARMS AND MILITARY GOODS IN EUROPE WERE LARGELY LOCATED IN GERMANY, AND NOT IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: FOR EXAMPLE, THE AMMUNITION DESTINED FOR ISRAEL FROM THE FRG WAS OF A SPECIAL NATURE AND THAT HE HAS BEEN TOLD IT WAS APPARENTLY NOT READILY AVAILABLE IN THE US OR IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. FRANK INDICATED NO SYMPATHY FOR THIS ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND STATED IN CONCLUSION THAT HE WOULD REPORT FULLY STATE SECRETARY FRANK'S EXPRESSION OF THE GERMAN POSITION, BUT NOTED THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DISTURBED BY THE SEEMING UNWILLINGNESS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO HELP OUT IN WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY STILL A VERY DIFFICULT AND UNCERTAIN SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

8. COMMENT: BASED ON OUR SEVERAL TALKS WITH FRANK

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IN THE PAST FEW DAYS, I AM CONVINCED THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR MOVING THE GERMANS TO ACCEPT OUR POSITION ARE BLEAK. THEY OBVIOUSLY PERCEIVE THEIR BASIC INTERESTS QUITE DIFFERENTLY FROM OURS. I DO NOT CONSIDER THAT FURTHER DEMARCHES TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE WILL BE USEFUL. MY

VIEW IS THAT IF WE WISH TO PRESS AHEAD WITH RESUPPLYING ISRAEL THROUGH USE OF FRG FACILITIES, TERRITORY, ETC. ONLY AN APPROACH AT A HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL STANDS ANY CHANCE OF MODIFYING THE GERMAN STANCE.

9. WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT, IN THE CONCRETE, IS 100 TRUCKS AND 75,000 ROUNDS OF 105 ARTILLERY AMMUNITION WHICH WERE TO BE PICKED UP BY THE THIRD OF THREE ISRAELI VESSELS AT BREMERHAVEN. AS I AM INFORMED, THE TRUCKS ARE PRESENTLY IN BREMERHAVEN, WHILE THE AMMUNITION IS STILL AT KAISERSLAUTERN LOADED ON A SPECIAL TRAIN. I DID NOT MENTION TO FRANK THAT WE ARE APPARENTLY CURRENTLY AIR-SHIPPING 10,000 ROUNDS OF 105 ARTILLERY AMMUNITION DIRECTLY OUT OF RAMSTEIN WITH COMPLETION SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 27. GERMANS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY CONSIDER THAT THEIR REQUEST TO STOP ALL SHIPMENTS FROM GERMAN SOIL ALSO COVERS THIS AIR ACTIVITY.
HILLENBRAND

SECRET

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